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Turkish report sheds light on Bulgarian link to Pope's assailant

By Paul B. Henze
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Further evidence has come to light to support charges that Bulgaria assisted the Turk who shot Pope John Paul II in 1981.

A still unreleased report by Turkish interrogators into the activities of Mehmet Ali Agca, who tried to kill the Pope, has significantly advanced understanding of his terrorist activities.

The 88-page report is the result of a reinvestigation, launched by the Turkish government in 1983, into the 1979 murder of Abdi Ipekci, a liberal Istanbul newspaper editor and one of Turkey's most respected figures. Mr. Agca has been convicted of that murder.

The report also describes in detail a sophisticated program for promoting destabilization and terrorism, in Turkey and elsewhere, with the ultimate aim of serving what the report terms Warsaw Pact purposes. Key revelations include the following:

● Agca was brought to Syria in the summer of 1978 by Teslim Tore, the head of Turkey's pro-communist People's Liberation Army. While there, Agca says he was trained in the "use of weapons, explosives, cold-war concepts, how to carry out coups d'état, and related revolutionary history."

● Agca says he met Bulgarian agents in Damascus, the capital of Syria, and received money from them to deliver to two leftist labor groups in Turkey. The money was to be used to fund subversive activities.

● Working under the direct tutelage of Abuzer Ugurlu, a reputed Turkish mafia "godfather," in Istanbul, Agca and his accomplices established an organization with the specific political aims of undermining "capitalism" and of severing Turkey's ties with the West.

● Agca developed a wide range of associations with a Turkish terrorist organization, the Gray Wolves — both as a "cover" and in order to draw rightist terrorists into supporting anti-Western goals. But he never became a Gray Wolf himself or joined the outlawed National Action Party with which the Gray Wolves were associated. (Both are rightist groups led by Col. Alpaslan Turkes.) In spite of widespread leftist allegations that Agca had killed Mr. Ipekci at the instigation of the National Action Party, no link could be found.

● Mr. Ugurlu was in continual contact with Bulgarian agents working out of the Bulgarian consulate in Istanbul. His alleged mafia operations involved the supply of arms to various factions throughout Turkey's political spectrum and to both right and left in Iran via Turkey.

● Along with Mr. Tore, one of Agca's closest associates in every phase of his activities was Oral Celik, a childhood friend who was also involved with the Bulgarians.

In Istanbul, Agca, Mr. Celik, and Tore pursued a strategy, according to Agca, "directed toward first separating Turkey from the Western powers and drawing it into the nonaligned group and then had the aim of getting it to join the Warsaw Pact....

"The reason for our activity was ideological. But I can also say that there was the adventure factor in addition. In that period I saw myself as a progressive.

"... From a political point of view we had relations with hundreds of members of both the right and the left as well as the mafia ... [who] were to play a secondary role to our own level of activity. Our goal was to fight against the Western democracies and destroy them. The possible contradiction in our position did not concern us. Bulgaria was seen as the country which could help us achieve our aim."

The Turkish report, though it leaves many questions about Agca and his activities unanswered, is the most valuable addition to our knowledge of Agca's activities since Italian Judge Ilario Martella's report in October 1984 on the alleged Bulgarian connection in the attempt on the Pope's life.

The full text of the Turkish report, like Judge Martella's, has still not been officially released. But lengthy excerpts appeared in Hurriyet, the leading Istanbul daily, on Feb. 1, the sixth anniver-

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